

Gerrish Warehouse  
0.1 mile southwest of State  
Route 103 on Pepperell Cove  
Kittery Point  
York County  
Maine

HABS No. ME-131

HABS  
ME,  
16-KITPD,  
16-

PHOTOGRAPHS

REDUCED COPIES OF MEASURED DRAWINGS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey  
National Park Service  
Department of the Interior  
Washington, D.C. 20240

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

GERRISH WAREHOUSE

HABS No. ME-131

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Location: On Pepperrell Cove, Kittery Point, York County, Maine.

Present Status: Owned by Mr. Charles S. Gerrish of Kittery Point. No longer in use.

Chain of Title: The building was part of the William Pepperrell estate until the estate was officially confiscated by the State of Massachusetts in 1778, for the owner's Tory affiliations. Capt. Samuel Smallcorn bought it in auction from the state and sold it in 1797 to Robert Follet. Follet's daughter married a Gerrish, and the building has been owned by Gerrishes since that time.

Date: Early 18th century: Mr. C. S. Gerrish thinks it was built about 1700.

Architect, Original Plans, etc.: Unknown.

Alterations and Uses: The building was first used as a central store, called a "warehouse" then, and was approached mainly by boat, for lack of roads and fear of Indians. Later, until about 1850, it was a ship's chandlery. In the second half of the 19th century the present Mr. Gerrish's grandfather used the building for a store, post office, and notary public's office. He died in 1882 and the building has not been used since. In the attic the 8 ft. diameter lift wheel still exists, and also a chimney, which has disappeared in the lower floors. On the middle level, opening onto the land, there are still sets of heavy shelves around the walls, and cupboards in the room's center. Their date is unknown, but obviously they are left from the old store. East of the the entrance to this floor there were formerly stairs to the lower floor. The lower floor, opening onto the water, contains no fixtures and according to Mr. Gerrish, never did. In the 1930's the old wood shingles were replaced with an asphalt shingle roof, and some time in the 20th century the trusses in the attic were propped up.

Sources: Interview with Mr. Charles S. Gerrish of Kittery Point, August 5, 1965. Everett S. Stackpole, in

Old Kittery and Her Families (Lewiston, Maine, Press of the Lewiston Journal, 1903), p. 56 ff, reproduces an 1849 map and description of Kittery Point "from 1775 to 1848": The Gerrish store is neither shown nor mentioned though the nearby Cutts Store, burnt by 1848, was. Pelatiah Fernald, describing Kittery Point in 1770-75 (typscript, in possession of Mr. Joseph Frost of the Pepperrell Mansion at Kittery point, of an 1849 manuscript by Fernald), mentions, east to west; the burying ground, "the store of Cutts now burned, then was Joshua White's house, gone many years, the next, now R. F. Gerrish's was Capt. Wm. Pillow's, and a store, now Mr. Oliver Cutt's barn. Next was Capt. Samuel Smallcorn's, now R. F. Gerrish's." Either of the last two might refer to the warehouse. The house of the present Mr. Gerrish, with any records it might have contained, burned down three months ago.

Prepared by: Martha Kingsbury  
Summer '65

## PART II. ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION

### A. General Statement:

1. This structure is a rare example of an early store and warehouse. Goods were brought here to be stored and sold to settlers dependent on river traffic. Important features include strap iron hinges, a hoist wheel and interior shutters.
2. Condition of the fabric: Ruinous.

### B. Detailed Description of the Exterior:

1. This structure is located on the north sloping shore of the Piscataqua River; a small rectangular clapboard building of 2 1/2 floors, gable roof, unstable masonry foundation of walls and piers; overall dimensions are 30' x 45'.
2. Foundations: Fragments of stone rubble walls and piers.
3. Wall construction: Wood frame. Clapboards over horizontal siding.
4. Structural system: Post and beam, with truss in loft paralleling the long dimension to eliminate intermediate interior supports. Some iron tensile members.

5. Openings:

- a. Doorways and doors: Doorways at north and south ends of building, two doors per opening. South doors made of wood boards; north doors, paneled.
- b. Windows and shutters: Fragments of 6/6 wood sash. Interior shutters, one per opening, slide horizontally into wall.

6. Roof: Gable roof covered with wood shingles, no cornice nor eaves.

C. Detailed Description of the Interior:

1. Floor plans:

- a. Ground floor accessible from double doors south elevation, one large space onto hillside with modern, reinforced concrete, bunker-like space at northeast corner.
- b. Second floor: Accessible from north doorway into hall between two small office-storage rooms (the space at the northwest corner inaccessible at the time of the survey). The hall leads into a large space used for storage. Ladder stairs to ground and loft levels.
- c. Loft: A large simple space interrupted by a truss extending the length of the building. A wood hoist wheel is located over a hatch at the south end of the building. There is a chimney fragment, which does not extend either above or below the loft.

2. Stairways: Ladder stairs between levels.

3. Flooring: Wood board floors.

4. Walls and ceiling: Mostly unfinished plaster and exposed structure.

5. Decorative features and trim: Cabinet fragments (inaccessible).

6. Notable hardware:

- a. Wood hoist wheel, approximately 8' diameter, grooved rim with iron spike guides, wood shaft. A rope originally passed around the rim through holes in the floor to an operator below. The second rope passed around the shaft to the object to be lifted.

- b. Strap hinges on south doors, "V" shaped with heart terminals.
- c. 19th c padlock on north doors.
- d. Thumb latches.

7. Lighting: None

8. Heating: None

D. Site and Surroundings:

Orientation: The structure is situated on the sloping north shore of the Piscataqua River at a rocky point. Nearby are the Lady Pepperrell Mansion, two large wood frame houses and the Congregational Church.

Prepared by: F. Blair Reeves, . A.I.A.  
H.A.B.S. Maine Coast 1965